

Appl. No. 09/979,531
Atty. Docket No. AA405
Amdt. dated 6/30/2004
Reply to Office Action of 10/06/03
Customer No. 27752

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8 are now in the case.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the moderate speed mixer with the addition of crystalline sodium aluminosilicate to the last zone of the mixer. Basis is at page 15, l. 9-10, page 16, l. 29-30 and page 17, l. 28-29. Claim 1 also recites that the surfactant in the spray dried granules is anionic, nonionic, or mixtures thereof. Basis is at page 11, l. 35-36. Claim 6 has been amended to more properly refer to the moderate speed mixer ("said mixer"). It is submitted that all claims are fully supported, and entry is requested.

Formal Matters

For the record, there are no objections or rejections under §112 outstanding.

Rejections Under 35 USC 102

Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7 stand rejected over U.S. 5,382,377, for reasons of record at page 3 of the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections on this basis.

As specifically disclosed in '377 at Col. 45, l. 45-50, the entire tower powder formulation was prepared with the zeolite (NaA, i.e., sodium aluminosilicate). In sharp contrast, in the present process sodium aluminosilicate must also be added in the last zone of the moderate speed mixer. This is not taught in '377. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under §102 is requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-2, 4-5 and 7-8 stand rejected over U.S. 5,703,037, for reasons of record at pages 4-5 of the Office Action.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections on this basis.

Claims 6, 9, 10 and 13 also stand rejected over '037, in further view of U.S. 6,391,844.

The cancellation of Claims 6, 9, 10 and 13 has obviated the rejections over the combination of '037/'844. For the record, it is noted that these claims relate to "downstream" processing of the product of the present invention. Accordingly, their cancellation is merely to speed prosecution and does not derogate from the scope of the main aspects of the claimed process.

Turning to '037, it is submitted that nothing therein teaches or suggests the elements of Claim 1, as now presented, nor any claims depending therefrom.

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First, '037 requires the presence of a cationic surfactant in the spray dried "powder." See Col. 1, l. 67 to Col., 2, l. 16. By contrast, the spray-dried granules herein contain an anionic or nonionic surfactant, or mixtures thereof.

Second, the addition of the zeolite in the last zone of the mixer is not taught or suggested in '037.

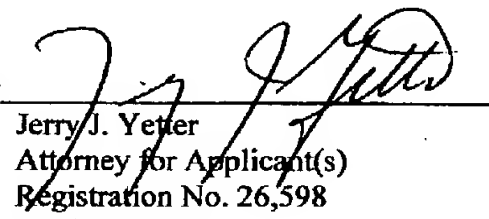
In short, since '037 neither teaches nor suggests these key elements of the claims as now presented, it is submitted that the rejections under §103 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, early and favorable action in the case is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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